Siaya West Tribune

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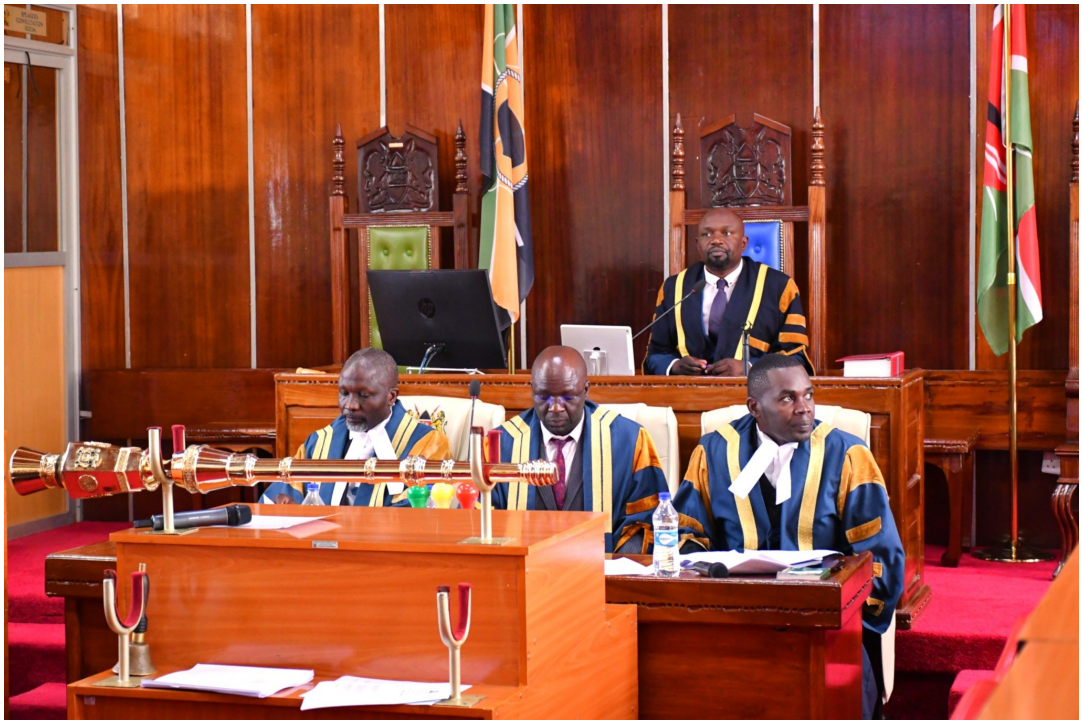
Where your story lives

Widows to get cheap loans and skills training

The Siaya county assembly has approved a landmark bill that seeks to protect widows from harsh cultural practices and improve their economic welfare. The bill provides for a special fund and a special county agency to serve the interest of widows.



Members of the Siaya county assembly unanimously passed a bill that seeks to enhance the protection and support of widows. It's estimated that 13.9% of women in Siaya are widows, the highest of any county in Kenya.

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Uradi, Nyadorera parish youth shine at Kisumu fest

The catholic parishes sent youth teams to participate at the diocesan music and drama festival held at St. Mary's Kibuye Girls in Kisumu.

Both parishes earned a spot to the finals in Mombasa.

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Secondary school students to get free meals

Students in secondary schools in Alego Usonga constituency are expected to benefit from a free feeding programme in 2026.

Read more on page 3

Sudhe FC takes lead in West Alego soccer league

Some 11 teams are participating in the West Alego soccer league this year.

The league is open to teams from West Alego ward. There would be more teams participating this season had some not missed the registration.

Besides paying a registration fee, a team must meet certain other conditions to participate.

While these requirements might whittle down the list of participants, the league has continued to deliver a thrilling show and develop talents.

Sudhe FC was at the top of the league with 22 points at the end of the first leg of the season last month. The team had played 10 games, winning seven, losing two, and drawing one.

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Siaya assembly passes widows protection bill

A bill that the county assembly of Siaya passed last month seeks to provide low-interest loans and skills training to widows across the county.

The bill, which was sponsored by South East Alego MCA Scholastica Madowo, got unanimous support in the assembly.

This bill is the first of its kind in Kenya, the Siaya assembly speaker George Okode announced.

"We have outlawed retrogressive behaviours and forceful actions that make our women, mothers, sisters and aunts who are widowed to be prejudiced. We have also provided for them a fund for their welfare," said Okode.

The Siaya County Widows Protection Bill 2025 aims at protecting widows and helping them become economically self-reliant.

In addition to providing cheap loans to widows, the bill also establishes a special agency to look after the interest of widows in other ways.

That agency is called the County Directorate of Widows Affairs, and it will advise the county government on policy matters relating to the welfare of widows.

As part of this work, there will be ward committees to protect and promote the interest of widows.

The bill establishes the Widows Welfare Fund that will provide low-interest loans to self-help groups run by widows. The goal is to help widows start small businesses to support their families.

The fund will also support the training of widows who want to learn vocational and technical skills that can earn them an income.

Siaya county has a high number of widows. According to data from Stats Kenya, 13.9% of women in the county are widows. That is more than double the national average of 6%, and it is the highest of any county.

Among Siaya's neighbouring counties, Vihiga has 11.3% of its women population as widows, Kisumu 10.1%, Busia 8.1% and Kakamega 7.8%.

Many widows in the county face a broad array of challenges, including poverty, land disputes, and harsh cultural practices.

Scholastica Madowo, the representative from South East Alego ward who sponsored the widows protection bill.

Supporters of the bill say it is a major step toward giving widows the dignity and support they need to rebuild their lives.

"The bill will protect them [windows] from participating in forced retrogressive cultural practices in the context of funeral rites and social ceremonies such as ritual cleansing, scarification, and forced remarriage," said Madowo, the bill's sponsor.

13.9%

Percentage of women who are widowed in Siaya county.

Stats Kenya

EDITORIAL

Why the Siaya West Tribune?

Welcome to the first issue of the *Siaya West Tribune*. This paper has a simple purpose: to provide coverage of the newly created Siaya West subcounty.

We are committed to level-headed journalism. No rush. No exaggeration. Just honest reporting that helps you understand your community better.

Too often, important stories about our schools, hospitals, roads, farmers, leaders, small businesses and local heroes go unnoticed. *The Tribune* seeks to look closely and highlight our achievements, challenges and efforts to build a better community.

We focus on local stories that don't get the attention they deserve. We want you to see yourself on these pages, to stay informed about what is happening here at home and to feel connected to your community.

This paper belongs to all of us. In God we trust that together we can build a better community that shines hope to everyone.

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Uradi, Nyadorera youth shine at Kisumu festival

Youth teams from Uradi and Nyadorera Catholic parishes made a strong showing at this year's diocesan music and drama festival held at St. Mary's Kibuye Girls in Kisumu on November 15.

The teams presented items in diverse categories and delivered impressive performances.

Uradi finished second in the spoken word category, while Nyadorera finished second in the modern dance category.

As a result, both parishes qualified for the national finals in Mombasa in their best categories.

Uradi's spoken word performance was written by Bella Atieno, directed by Martin Akunya and presented by Lovine Achach and Antony Otiato Aloka.

Although Uradi and Nyadorera parishes had only a single item each advancing to the finals, parish youth leaders described the achievement as a proud moment for the church and community.

Aside from Uradi and Nyadorera, other participating parishes included Sega, Rangala, Kibuye, Ahero, Uwai and Kogola.

Secondary school students promised free meals

Students and teachers at Nyasita secondary school pose for a photo with food supplies delivered to the school under the 2025 emergency feeding programme.

MP Samuel Atandi plans to provide free meals to students in all secondary schools in Alego Usonga constituency in 2026.

Speaking during a fundraising event for Absolute Grace Time Ministries in Uranga on November 9, Atandi said the school feeding programme would begin in January.

"From January, I'll take food to all secondary schools in the constituency. If school principals need extra money, we can provide that with CDF," said the MP.

Alego Usonga has 47 day secondary schools with more than 16,300 students.

In October, shortly before schools closed for the year, Atandi announced that he was sending emergency food supplies to schools in collaboration with partners.

That programme, backed by the Child Welfare Society of Kenya, delivered 560 bags of maize, 200 bags of beans, 57 bags of cowpeas and 115 20-liter jerry cans of cooking oil to 47 schools.

The feeding programme aims to help keep children in schools and enhance their academic performance.

Students avoiding Kalkada and Kabura secondary schools?

At the end of the 2025 school year, Kalkada secondary school had only 63 students overall, according to a list of schools shared by MP Samuel Atandi.

That makes it the school with the least number of students in Siaya West subcounty and Alego Usonga constituency.

Learners also appear to be avoiding Kabura secondary school, which closed the year with only 72 students.

Other schools around have good student numbers. Malomba secondary school, which is located only a few kilometres from Kalkada, has 372 students. Fr. Gulik Girls has 295 students and Mahola has 576.

Mwer High School, one of the oldest secondary schools in the subcounty, is also struggling to keep students.

It closed the year with 123 students. While that is nearly twice as many students as you'll find at Kalkada, it represents a steep decline in student enrollment for this school.

At one time, Mwer had more than 1,000 students and produced stellar results in national exams.

Mwer alums include Prof. Patrick Hayombe of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University and the National Bank CEO George Odhiambo.

The low student enrollment at Kalkada, Kabura and Mwer secondary schools corresponds to weak KCSE performance.

During a 2023 alumni meeting, Mwer old boys, led by the chairman Frank Ochung, sought to understand what had gone wrong with their school.

The old boys have continued to raise funds to upgrade the school's infrastructure with the hope of improving its academic performance.

The national government in Nairobi is considering merging schools with low learner enrollment. That puts Kalkada and Kabura secondary schools at risk of closure.

Got news to share with the community?

Reach us on

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West Alego league: Sudhe tops first leg of season

Continued from page 1

Sudhe has had a string of successes in local competitions, and some of its players have earned a spot in the prestigious MOFA soccer academy. It is the defending champion this season.

Coming right behind Sudhe was Maalim FC with 21 points out of 10 games played, with six wins, three draws, and one loss.

Sidok and SC Young Ballers tied in third place with 20 points each, both having identical runs of six wins, two losses, and two draws.

Rounding out the top five list was Kalkada Riverside FC with 15 points. It had played 10 games, winning four, losing three, and drawing three.

In this picture, Udenda FC captain Brian Ochieng (left) and Kabura Talents FC captain Clinton Otieno (right) pose for a photo with match officials before the action at Kabura grounds.

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Sudhe FC's points

In a recent encounter, Kabura Talents FC defeated Sirinde FC in a match that ended 1-0 at Duha primary school grounds.

2025 Accidents that broke hearts

A car flipped over in the canal near Sango market in May, killing a woman and her child.

The roads can be dangerous. Please be careful this holiday. The NTSA reports that 4,200 people have died in road accidents in the country since January.

Men account for the vast majority of the fatalities. This means families have not only lost their loved ones but also main breadwinners.

In Siaya West subcounty, many families have been heartbroken by traffic accidents this year.

In April, a car driven by businessman Robert Odembo crashed into a school bus near the Legio Maria Church in Uranga. The accident killed Odembo alongside his two children and their househelp. Odembo's wife and three other children survived with severe injuries. Odembo operated a hardware business in Port Victoria.

In May, a car plunged into the canal near the Sango market and flipped over. The accidents left a woman and her infant boy dead.

In October, a man died after the car he was travelling in veered off the road and landed in a ditch just outside Rabar shopping centre in Komenya.

The casualty, identified as Elly Ouma, hailed from Kaugagi Hawinga.

Buffalo Bicycles team offers free repairs at Mwer shopping centre

A team of expert mechanics from Buffalo Bicycles offered free bicycle repairs at Mwer shopping centre on November 15.

The one-day service attracted Buffalo bicycle owners from across the surrounding villages.

Buffalo bicycles are widely used in this area. They are known for their durability and quiet ride.

For many families, these bicycles are an important part of daily transport. Many students use these bicycles for school commutes.

The free repair session gave owners a chance to have their bicycles checked and fixed without having to pay any service fees as long as they bought genuine parts.

Those who came for the service appreciated the initiative, saying it helped reduce maintenance costs at a time when many families are facing financial difficulties.

Besides saving households money, such initiatives contribute to safe cycling.

The Siaya West Tribune is published by Qwara Media. It covers the Siaya West subcounty. Email: qwaramedia@gmail.com